



FALL REMINDER  
KEEP LEAVES OUT OF THE STREET

As summer turns to fall, leaves on Bloomington trees will change color and eventually begin to pile up around the yard. When raking or blowing leaves, be sure to keep leaves off your street.

Leaves are a significant contributor to poor water quality. When leaves enter storm sewers and travel into ponds and lakes they cause excess algae growth that severely impacts the health of the water. In addition, leaves block storm drains and can cause flooding in neighborhoods. Residents can help by removing leaves and other debris from nearby storm drains.

When bagging leaves and other yard waste, remember to use compostable bags. As of 2010, per a new state law, plastic bags once used to collect fall leaves are no longer accepted by garbage haulers in Bloomington.

For more information, call Environmental Health at 952-563-8934.



BUCKTHORN BUST  
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP  
WEED OUT INVASIVE PLANT

Buckthorn, an invasive plant that grows very quickly, is having a major impact on many of Bloomington’s wooded areas, choking out native trees, shrubs and other plants.

Join the City of Bloomington in clearing buckthorn from Normandale Lake Park, 5901 West 84 Street, **Saturday, October 9, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Volunteers should come to the Chalet Road parking lot on the day of the event for registration and instructions.

Be sure to wear sturdy shoes, jeans and long-sleeved shirts, and bring eye protection. Some cutting and removal tools will be provided, but volunteers should bring a bow saw, hand saw or hand shears if they have them. Water and snacks will also be provided.

For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: BUCKTHORN.**

*Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it’s saving energy or guarding Bloomington’s precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...*

EARTH ACTION HEROES  
FRIENDS OF THE FARMERS MARKET

The Bloomington Farmers Market is attended by close to 3,000 people every Saturday. Some visitors come for the fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables, some for the large assortment of baked goods and cut flowers, and others for the cooking demonstrations and lively entertainment. With everything it has to offer, the Farmers Market has definitely garnered a large fan base. Yet some fans, bordering on Farmers Market fanatics, stand out from the rest.

Ask Bloomington resident of 20 years Ann Pliego, *pictured right*, and she’ll tell you she is the Farmers Market’s biggest fan.

“I always recommend the Farmers Market to people,” Pliego said.

“I get downright excited and rave about the things I buy each week and the market is expanding so much that I



can get pretty much all my shopping needs met.”

As a farm girl from Northern Minnesota, Pliego knows how important it is to support small farms. It’s one of the reasons she frequents the market. Pliego even brings her own basket.

“I started carrying a basket the first season and people asked me where I got it,” Pliego said. “Now I see baskets all the time. People are catching on.”

Resident Doree Maser, *pictured below*, has attended the Farmers Market to shop, but it wasn’t until recently that she started her own booth. Using her talent for sewing and her passion for reusing and repurposing materials, she spent the first three weekends of the 2010 Farmers Market turning old t-shirts into reusable shopping bags.

Maser uses an antique Singer sewing machine with a hand crank to make the t-shirt bags.

“I have always been into recycling and composting and I use recycled fabrics as much as possible in my sewing,” she said.

Maser not only makes shopping bags out of t-shirts, she makes bibs, mittens and vests out of old towels.

The reusable t-shirt-bag-making event was just one of many



sustainable initiatives at the Farmers Market this year.

Several weekends in July and August the Farmers Market teamed up with Bloomington Public Health to offer a bike valet, in which visitors who rode their bikes to the market received a coupon for \$2 off any item.

Using funds from the Statewide Health Improvement Program, Public Health has been working with Farmers Market Coordinator Keri Lahl to shape practices and make environmental changes that improve public access to nutritious foods such as the fruits and vegetables sold at the market.

The Farmers Market, held in the east parking lot of Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, runs **every Saturday, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., through October 16**. The market moves indoors to the Civic Plaza lobby, **November 13 and December 11, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FARMERS MARKET.**

FEDERAL TAX  
CREDITS FOR ENERGY  
EFFICIENCY  
ACT FAST - MOST CREDITS  
EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2010

If you purchase an energy-efficient product or renewable energy system for your home, you may be eligible for a federal tax credit. Included in the tax credit are insulation, high-efficiency windows, doors, heating and air conditioning systems, efficient biomass stoves, roofing materials and non-solar water heaters.

Products must meet energy efficiency standards to qualify for the tax credit. The tax credit expires December 31, 2010.

The tax credit can only be applied to materials used in existing homes. New construction does not qualify. The house must be the owner’s principal residence.

For more information, including a complete list of qualified products, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

DO YOUR PART : ACT SUSTAINABLY

SAVING YOU ENERGY, TIME AND MONEY  
HOME ENERGY AUDITS

Do you want your home to be more energy efficient, but you’ve procrastinated when it comes to doing anything about it? The Home Energy Squad can help make it easy to save money.

The Squad was created by Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy to help homeowners identify how to conserve energy and save money when it comes to their electric and natural gas costs.

A team of energy experts will assess your home’s energy efficiency and install immediate energy saving devices. You only pay for the cost of materials. The cost of labor (a \$200 value) is covered by Xcel and CenterPoint.

Choose the package that best fits your needs. Homeowners can expect to save around \$120 a year on energy costs.

Basic Squad Service is \$50 and includes a high-efficiency shower head, kitchen and bathroom faucet aerators, and refrigerator and water heater thermometers. Plus, choose two of the following: ten spiral compact fluorescent lights, programmable thermostat or weatherstripping for one door.

Premium Squad Service, including all of the above and more, is available for \$80.

In addition, Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy offer rebates on certain energy-efficient products and services. Combine these rebates with the Federal tax credits for energy efficiency, *see article left*, and save even more money.



For more information on the Home Energy Squad program, call 866-222-4595 or visit the City’s website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: ENERGY EFFICIENCY.**